

Child and Family Services Update

May 30, 2003

Okay, We Need Your Help! We're Getting Close To The Deadline!

By Richard Anderson

We urgently need your help in making sure that all employees of Child and Family Services (except maybe support staff), hired on or before January 1, 2003, have completed all Practice Model training and any make-up sessions they need by August 29, 2003. This is a part of our court agreement.

Our experience is showing! With the many reviews of our work, it is becoming more and more obvious that as we apply our Practice Model accurately, services to children and families are becoming more successful. It is also becoming clearer that when the Practice Model is not delivered, or delivered in part, there is not the level of success we expect of our division. If you are not fully trained in the Model and have not received mentoring in the practices of the Model, then we cannot expect you to be as successful in your work as those that are fully trained, mentored, and practicing the full Model. And we don't want you to lose out or be left behind!

Over the next few months, many of you will be obtaining the training on the Practice Model that you have not yet received or have missed. I have asked the administrations in each region to ensure that each caseworker who has not finished all of the Practice Model training be given:

- A list of the modules or portions of modules you need to complete,
- The dates of the training that you will need to attend to be given those, and
- Notification that completion of the Practice Model training is a requirement for employment with Child and Family Services.

I guess you can consider this e-mail "Update" article as having made sure you know about the third item on the list. Hopefully, by now, you should have the other two pieces -- which modules, or portions of modules, you need to attend, and when these are scheduled. If you have not received this information yet, then please ask your supervisor to work with you in obtaining this from your regional administration. Supervisors are responsible for making sure that the schedules are coordinated for all staff in their units and that their staff completes all of the training. If a session is missed, then it needs to be made up. We have set a completion date of August 29, 2003, for everyone who has been with Child and Family Services prior to January 1, 2003, to be completely trained on the Practice Model. I realize it's summer and many are taking vacations. We have many training offerings on the Model across the state. We have limited travel budgets, but will support attendance at sites other than the one you are scheduled to attend, if you honestly cannot make the schedule in your area work. Your supervisor is asked to work with you in making these arrangements.

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For those of you who are not caseworkers, you will be notified of the training that will be designed to meet your needs in the Practice Model, although you can contact your region administration if you would like to attend the same training as the caseworkers.

We, in Child and Family Services, and those in our communities that have assisted in developing our practice principles, are committed to following these principles. In our Practice Model training we address key principles and teach the skills needed in carrying out those principles. The Practice Model training delivery is one of the major ways that we are specifically supporting the following two Practice Model Principles.

- **“Organizational Competence”** – Committed, qualified, trained, and skilled staff, supported by an effectively structured organization, help ensure positive outcomes for children and families.”
- **“Professional Competence”** – Children and families need a relationship with an accepting, concerned, empathetic worker who can confront difficult issues and effectively assist them in their process toward positive change.”

Completion of the Practice Model training is a requirement of the Milestone Plan through the oversight of the Federal Court. We are very committed to keeping the promises that were made in the Milestone Plan and in the most recent stipulation to the Court. We feel an even more important goal is the implementation of effective, sound, and consistent practice, and we hope you agree with us and will do everything in your power to help support us on this.

Please learn all you can about the Practice Model. Even if the trainer has a bad day, assist in making the training come to life for what you need in the field. I appreciate every person who has worked on the training, those who are delivering the training, and all of you, our staff and community partners, who are making this Model provide a real upward lift for those who are trying to make great changes in their lives and need a truly cohesive and effective service delivered to them. Thank you for all your good work.